



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
DARRELL V. MCGRAW, JR.
CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION
1-800-368-8808 or 304-558-8986

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Kim Stitzinger-Jones

Phone: (800) 368-8808

Attorney General McGraw Settles with Fisher Price, Mattel for Selling Lead Contaminated Toys in West Virginia

Today, Attorney General Darrell McGraw entered into a settlement with toy manufacturers, Mattel and Fisher Price. The settlement, filed in Kanawha County Circuit Court, will result in additional protections for West Virginia children from exposure to dangerous levels of lead in toys.

In 2007, Mattel and Fisher Price voluntarily recalled millions of units of toys containing excessive lead in the surface paint. Those toys posed a risk of injury to children who swallowed or placed the toys in their mouths. Exposure to lead causes lead to accumulate in the body over time. Even very small amounts of lead in the body can cause serious neurological damage, including, lowering IQ levels and behavioral problems. Higher levels of lead can cause seizures, coma or death.

During the recalls last year, the Attorney General's office offered West Virginians the opportunity to have the paint on their toys tested to determine if the lead levels in the surface paint were illegal. Testing was conducted at various events around the State, including the Capitol City Arts and Crafts Show, Morgan County Fair, West Virginia State Fair, the Parkersburg Homecoming and the South Charleston Summer Festival.

Today's settlement will require Mattel and Fisher Price to reduce the levels of lead on toy's surface paint below the current allowable federal standard. The companies will also notify the Attorney General's office, within three days of the discovery days, if they discover a toy contains excessive lead. Mattel and Fisher Price will also take other measures to monitor their products to ensure these new standards are met. Thirty- eight states will share the \$12 million payment to be paid by the defendants by January 30, 2009, for consumer protection.

"This settlement will provide protection for our most vulnerable West Virginians—our children," said Attorney General McGraw. "We have to ensure the health of our children is not endangered by their toys." These new standards will result in fewer children being harmed by exposure to excessive levels of lead.

Thirty-seven other states, including Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin and Wyoming, are included in the settlement.

Any persons wishing to file a complaint about a consumer matter or to alert the Attorney General about unfair or deceptive practices may do so by calling the Consumer Protection Hot Line, 1-800-368-8808, or by obtaining a complaint form from the consumer web page at www.wvago.gov.

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